



News Release

For immediate release: January 7, 2014

(14-001)

Contacts: [Tim Church](#), Communications Office
[Donn Moyer](#), Communications Office

360-236-4077
360-236-4076

Tests on Poverty Bay geoducks show they're safe to eat

OLYMPIA — Arsenic tests on geoducks from Poverty Bay in Puget Sound confirm previous state analysis that showed they're safe to eat and there are no health concerns.

China [banned all shellfish exports](#) from Washington and most of the U.S. west coast based in part on a geoduck shipment tracked to Poverty Bay that tested above its standard for inorganic arsenic. After learning of China's test result, the Washington State [Department of Health conducted tests](#) on the edible parts of geoducks from that same harvest area. The state test results on the edible parts were well below China's standard. Washington had one test result above that standard, but it was in a whole-animal test, which included the inedible portion — the skin.

“These test results confirm our expectation that it's safe to eat geoducks harvested from the Poverty Bay area of Puget Sound,” said Secretary of Health John Wiesman. “We've given the test results to our state partners and to the federal partners that are working directly with China.”

These findings have been conveyed to authorities in China by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Seafood Inspection Program.

Health officials expected the recent test results would show no health risk from inorganic arsenic. To confirm that, the Department of Health worked with the Department of Natural Resources to collect geoducks from Poverty Bay for testing.

Health officials plan targeted testing for arsenic but do not plan routine arsenic testing in shellfish. The Department of Health's goal is to ensure that shellfish harvested in the waters of the state are safe to eat.

The [Department of Health website](#) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

###